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Virginians can see Virginia HMO Quality and Performance Information

January 6, 2005, Richmond, Virginia—**Virginia Health Information (VHI)**, an independent nonprofit health information company, publishes Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) quality information at www.vhi.org. The **VHI** information covers a broad range of HMO performance in six areas and includes almost seventy separate measures. Key areas of HMO performance are compared including access to care, effectiveness of care, disease prevention, member satisfaction and financial performance. **VHI** publishes this information to help Virginians choose the best HMO for their needs.

Michael Lundberg, **VHI's** Executive Director, says, "Fourteen HMOs provide health care coverage to about one in four Virginians and emphasize preventing illness and effectively managing chronic illnesses. Consumers and businesses want good information on how HMOs compare along these quality of care measures."

About three out of four HMO members gave HMOs high marks on their ability to get needed care, overall satisfaction with health care received and satisfaction with their personal doctor or nurse. Details on how often members received comprehensive care for diabetes, flu shots, recommended childhood immunizations, appropriate treatment for asthma and other measures are easily displayed for HMOs along with state averages.

VHI's HMO Finder tool lets consumers find HMOs serving their city or county. The Links section to associations, state and national agencies and departments may be helpful resources regarding insurance plans. HMO web sites include physician and hospital directories and access to rate quotes for some HMOs.

"Diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other conditions in the HMO reports are important quality measures. These measures complement the Virginia Department of Health's (VDH) existing disease prevention and management programs for Virginians," notes State Health Commissioner Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H. The VDH contracts with **VHI** to develop HMO and other health information from ambulatory surgery centers, hospitals, nursing homes and physicians for consumers, businesses and others.

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